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FETERITA (*Andropogon sorghum* var.).

This sorghum was first introduced into the United States from Alexandria, Egypt, November, 1906, and was later secured from Sudan, where it is commonly grown under the name feterita. As it is a member of the group of sorghums called durra, the name "Sudan durra" has also been applied to it.

Feterita is an early-maturing sorghum of considerable promise both for grain and forage. It has rather slender stems 5 to 7 feet high, which are semijuicy and slightly sweet before ripening and only fairly leafy. The stems are of irregular height, owing to its stooing and branching habit, which also results in some unevenness in maturity.

It resembles milo in habit except that the heads are uniformly erect and the seeds are larger and softer as well as bluish white in color. The seed tends to shatter if it is allowed to stand in the field until overripe.

It is a week earlier than Dwarf milo and about three weeks earlier than Blackhull kafir. In drought resistance it compares favorably with any sorghum yet introduced. Yields of 30 to 50 bushels per acre may be expected under ordinary conditions in the kafir and milo region.

Planting.—Feterita should be planted about the same time as the other sorghums, perhaps three or four weeks later than Indian corn. It is not well to plant too early, while the ground is cold, since feterita is naturally a warm-weather plant, and owing to the softness of the seed there is apt to be considerable loss through decay before germination. Difficulty in obtaining a stand has been experienced in some localities, the poor stand probably being due to planting in cold ground. In regions affected by the sorghum midge, very early plantings are recommended. It may be planted either in a furrow with the lister or surface planted with the ordinary corn planter. The lister method is advised in arid sections. Feterita should be planted in rows the same distance apart as Indian corn, about 36 to 44 inches. When thus planted 6 to 8 pounds of seed per acre will be required.

Cultivation.—Feterita should be cultivated much the same as Indian corn. It may be given two or three harrowings while the plants are small, and as soon as sufficient growth is made the crop should be given a fairly deep and thorough cultivation. Two or three subsequent and shallower cultivations are desirable. Late cultivations must be shallow to avoid breaking the surface-feeding roots.

Harvesting.—For combined utilization as forage and grain the crop should be cut in the late dough stage. When planted in rows, the crop can best be handled with a corn harvester and put in shocks of 20 to 30 bundles each. If these shocks are allowed to stand for some time before being headed it will allow more complete maturity of the heads arising from the stools. Where the crop is intended solely for grain, it should be allowed to stand until the earliest heads are fully mature; but it must not be left until all the heads are fully ripe, else considerable seed may be lost through shattering. Where the heads are cut off in the field, it is best to pasture the remainder of the crop. Should the crop go down on account of a storm before it is harvested, it can be utilized by pasturing with hogs or cattle.

Feeding.—The forage value of feterita is about equal to that of milo. For strictly forage purposes it is perhaps excelled by both the kafirs and the sweet sorghums. The heavy production of grain, however, makes it effective when fed in the bundle, heads and all, to work horses or stock cattle. For fattening cattle or sheep it can also be fed in this manner with good results. It is not as valuable for dairy cows as for the above classes of stock. For use as silage it will be found equal to any of the sorghums. As a grain it will probably rank along with the kafirs and milos, 10 bushels of it being considered equal to 9 bushels of shelled Indian corn. The addition of a small amount of cottonseed meal or other concentrate high in fat will greatly increase its effectiveness as a flesh producer.

Seed selection.—In growing this crop every farmer should make a practice of selecting seed for his own planting. This is extremely important with feterita because it is a new crop, quite variable as yet, and also because, on account of its open glumes, natural crossing takes place oftener than in other sorghums. Seed selections should be made at a distance of 100 yards or more from other varieties. These selections are best made as soon as the first heads mature. Only leafy erect plants that have no side branches and little tendency to stool should be chosen. The head should be one well free from the boot, large and well filled from butt to tip. Such plants, if seeded thickly enough, will produce as much seed as the stooing type and will be much easier to harvest on account of the more uniform maturity of the seed heads. The field should be rogued consistently each season to remove other types of sorghum if the grain is intended for home planting or for sale as seed.

Suggestions.—Feterita should be compared carefully with the ordinary sorghum crops of your locality, especially with Dwarf milo and Blackhull kafir. Exaggerated claims for feterita are being made by certain growers who are taking advantage of the lack of knowledge regarding this crop to secure enormous profits through the sale of seed. Miraculous yields are not to be expected, but under ordinary conditions feterita should at least equal Blackhull kafir and Dwarf milo. Farmers are advised to try feterita in comparison with milo or Blackhull kafir before planting it extensively. It would be well to try different rates of seeding in each locality. Stands having plants 4, 8, 12, and 18 inches apart in the row should be tested. Seeding at different dates should also be tried. Reports on the success of the crop as a stock feed and also on its comparative drought resistance are desired.

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